

Home Life... Out of apple juice

Situation:

I live in a family care facility and there are three residents along with the two people who own the home and pretty much take care of things for us. Yesterday when I came home from the drop-in center I wanted some apple juice. It was about 4:30 and I knew supper wouldn't be ready until 6:00. When I went to the refrigerator, the bottle of apple juice that was there in the morning wasn't there anymore. Then I looked in the cupboard and couldn't find any either.

Symptoms:

I started to get upset inside. I just didn't feel good. I got mad and went to my room. One of the other guys, Bobbie came by and asked what was wrong. I said: "Nothing!" I didn't want to talk about it. But the more I thought about not having any apple juice, the more upset I got. So I just laid on my bed listening to my Walkman with the headphones on.

Solution:

It took a while, but I started to think about what I was thinking. I took out a piece of paper and wrote some things down.
I don't like it when Mrs. Jones doesn't buy enough of stuff that I like. Like apple juice. I deserve to have what I want and when I want it.
I wonder who it was that drank what was left in the bottle from this morning. I bet it was John. He's always doing things that I don't like.
I'm really mad about this.
My stomach is starting to feel funny. And my hands are shaking.

Once I had my thoughts down on paper, the next thing I did was to make up new thoughts. I knew it was a way for me to calm down and start feeling better.

For: I don't like it when Mrs. Jones doesn't buy enough of stuff that I like. Like apple juice.

I wrote: It's OK for me to get mad about something, but it's not good for me to stay mad about it.

I wrote: Sometimes at the drop-in center we don't have any hot chocolate when people want it. So it's average not to have a favorite drink when you want it.

I wrote: Not having apple juice when I want it is No BIG deal. It's distressing – but it's really not dangerous at all.

I wrote: I know my mental health is more important than whether I have apple juice right now.

For: I deserve to have what I want and when I want it.



I wrote: Apple juice is a want – not a need. I'm not going to starve. Dinner is only an hour away now.

For: I wonder who it was that drank what was left in the bottle from this morning. I bet it was John. He's always doing things that I don't like.

I wrote: I don't know who drank it. Maybe it was more than one person. Even if I ask John if he drank the last of it, there still won't be any apple juice for me right now.

For: I'm really mad about this.

I wrote: I don't have to "stay" mad about it. If I keep telling myself it's not a big deal, I'll calm down. And when I calm my thoughts down, my stomach will calm down and my hands will stop shaking so much.

In the past:

Before I had any training and learned that my thoughts had a whole lot to do with how I was feeling and that I could change my thoughts, I would have got mad and stayed mad. I probably would have stayed in my room and pouted. When the other people had dinner, I wouldn't got out there to eat with them, because my stomach would be really upset. Even the next morning I might have had an attitude. I'd just be sulking around, not being angry on the outside, but still being all upset inside and feeling kind of depressed.

This time I did what I could to help myself calm down and I feel good about me.

